<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 21, 2003. Claims 36 to 50 are now pending in the application, with Claims 48 to 50 having been added, and Claims 36, 40 and 44, the independent claims herein, having been amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The title was objected to. A new title has been provided as set forth above and therefore, withdrawal of the objection to the title is respectfully requested.

Claims 36 to 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,287,194 (Lobiondo) and incorporated references U.S. Patent No. 5,045,880 (Evanitsky) and U.S. Patent No. 5,036,361 (Filion). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns designating selection conditions for selecting an image output apparatus from among a plurality of image output apparatuses. According to the invention, selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, are limited within a range so defined that at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions, where the range is represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses. The limited selection conditions are then displayed on a display so the operator can designate a desired selection condition. In other words, the selection conditions are limited so that only those conditions for which at least one of the plurality of image output apparatus' satisfies the conditions are displayed. As an example, where two printers are connected to a network but neither printer can perform color printing, color printing is not displayed as a selectable condition, but rather, only the other functions of the

printers are displayed. As a result, conditions which cannot be satisfied are not displayed due to the selection conditions being limited according to the invention.

With specific reference to the claims, amended independent Claim 36 is a data processing apparatus having a printer driver for generating print data in accordance with a print request issued by an application program assigning the generated print data to one of a plurality of image output apparatuses and that communicates with the plurality of image output apparatuses via a network, the data processing apparatus comprising limiting means for limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range so defined that at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions, the range being represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses, control means for controlling a display device to display the selection conditions limited by the limiting means in a form such that the operator can designate a desired selection condition, and constructing means for constructing, within the data processing apparatus, a plurality of logical interfaces, for transmitting the print data directly to one of the plurality of image output apparatuses via the network, each of the plurality of logical interfaces respectively corresponding to the plurality of image output apparatuses, wherein the generated print data is assigned to one of the plurality of image output apparatuses that is selected based on a selection condition designated by the operator and information which is stored in advance and which indicates print functions of the plurality of image output apparatuses.

Amended independent Claims 40 and 44 are method and memory medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 36.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 36, 40 and 44. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range so defined that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions, the range being represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses.

Lobiondo is seen to disclose a printshop scheduler that schedules and distributes a job among a plurality of printers based upon information such as a time when the job is to be completed. If a requested completion time does not allow printing of a print job by a single printer, the print job is allocated to a plurality of available printers instead so that the different portions of the job are printed by different printers. However, Lobiondo is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range so defined that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions, the range being represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses. The Office Action admits as much, but cites the incorporated reference to Evanitsky as allegedly disclosing such a feature.

Evanitsky is merely seen to disclose various programming techniques for programming reproduction of a plurality of complex jobs. The Office Action relied upon Figure 14, and in particular, the range of reduction/enlargement percentages as allegedly

teaching the claimed limiting of selection conditions. However, Applicant wishes to point out that the claims call for limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, *within a range so defined that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions*, the range being represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses. In other words, the range depicted in Evantisky's Figure 14 merely corresponds to a function that can be set for the single copier disclosed in Evantisky and is not one that is *so defined that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions*. Accordingly, Evantisky is not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing feature of the present invention.

Moreover, the magnification percentage designated by the operator in Evanitsky is not used to select a copier to process the job. Rather, the display in Figure 14 is for a copier that has already been selected to process the job. Therefore, the selection conditions displayed in Figure 14 are not limited within a range so defined that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions, the range being represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses. Accordingly, Evanitsky also cannot select one of the plurality of image output apparatus' based on a selection condition designated by the operator and information which is stored in advance and which indicates print functions of the plurality of image output apparatuses.

Filion is not seen to add anything to overcome the deficiencies of Lobiondo and Evanitsky and is also not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range so defined that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition that can be designated by the operator among the limited selection conditions, the range being represented by a sum of functions each provided by at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses.

In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, all of Claims 36 to 50 are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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